



URBAN DEATH PROJECT WANTS TO MAKE FUNERALS GREEN BY TURNING BODIES INTO COMPOST



Urban Death Project has designed a new ceremony that respects the dead and celebrates the cycle of life by giving bodies back to the soil.

Eco burials aren't a new concept — it's the more elaborate funerals involving expensive caskets that are the relatively new phenomenon in history — but more people are choosing to consciously avoid wasting resources in the age of climate change. Funeral directors such as the [Hippensteel Funeral Service and Crematory](#) in Indiana have been offering natural burials since 2012, with RFID tags to help loved ones locate the unmarked graves. Now the [Urban Death Project](#) has designed a new ceremony that respects the dead and celebrates the cycle of life by giving bodies back to the soil.

City cemeteries are only getting more and more full, and massive amounts of wood, steel, concrete and formaldehyde is placed into the Earth's soil every year through conventional burials. Even cremations release energy and carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, rather than putting them to use. Urban Death Project is enabling anyone to plan a funeral that disposes of bodies in a more environmentally-friendly and natural way that benefits the planet.

First, the deceased is placed into a refrigerator in the days before the ceremony. No embalming takes place to avoid placing chemicals into the ground and the funeral must happen within around 10 days of the date of death. On the day, loved ones can see the body if they wish, and help shroud it with a simple linen. The body is then laid into the 'core', a concrete chamber that's at the center of the composting facility where other people will have been laid to rest. Friends and family can cover the body with a high-carbon mixture of wood chips and sawdust. Due to the decomposition happening inside, the concrete chamber walls are warm, reminding visitors of the process happening inside. After a month, family and friends can return to the site to see the compost that's been created from their loved one. They can take the compost back to their homes or pass it over to the local community, where it can be used to help grow new plantlife.

Although it might prove too close to home for some, Urban Death Project fills a niche for those who want to make sure their body can benefit the Earth rather than contribute to resource waste. Are there other alternatives to the traditional funeral?

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